

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 05625 010716Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USLO RIYADH

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, SA
SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST PEACE SETTLEMENT

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF AN EDITORIAL WHICH APPEARED IN
ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SAUDI GAZETTE OF MONDAY, JULY 31, 1978.
BEGIN TEXT: "THE APPARENT REJECTION BY PRESIDENT SADAT OF
WHATEVER IDEAS MR. ATHERTON HAS BROUGHT BACK WITH HIM FROM
ISRAEL COULD REALLY BE THE UNOFFICIAL END OF THE SO CALLED
'SATAT'S INITIATIVE'.
" FOR SOME REASON, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT SEES IN
HARDLINE STANDS, THE BEST ATTITUDE TO TAKE IN FACE OF ARAB
WILLINGNESS TO TALK AND COMPROMISE.
"PERHAPS THE ISRAELIS DO NOT SEE THE ARABS AS BEING
ABLE TO DO ANYTHING ELSE -- EXCEPT TO COMPROMISE. SO WHY
ACCEPT A LENIENT POSITION IF YOU KNOW THAT AN EVEN
MORE LENIENT ONE CAN BE PRESSED FOR?
"AND WHAT OTHER ALTERNATIVE DO ARABS HAVE?
AS ISRAEL SEES IT, AND AS MANY MILITARY EXPERTS
FORECAST, A NEW CONFLICT WILL END UP IN THE ZIONIST
STATES' FAVOUR.

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" THE ARGUMENT THAT 1973 WAR PROVED A SIMILAR
ASSUMPTION WRONG IS NOT TAKEN TOO SERIOUSLY. THE
MILITARY IMBALANCE IS NOW TOO MUCH IN ISRAELI
FAVOUR TO ALLOW FOR A REPETITION OF THE CRITICAL
DAYS OF OCTOBER 1973.
"POLITICAL PRESSURE FROM THE U.S. IS ALSO
DISCOUNTED BY THE ISRAELIS. PAST EXPERIENCE HAS

SHOWN ALREADY IN MORE THAN ONE INSTANCE THAT
PRESIDENT CARTER CAN BE PRESSED INTO CHANGING HIS
POSITION.

"MANY ARABS STILL BITTERLY REMEMBER THE
ZIGZAGING LINE OF POSITIVE STATEMENTS AND THEIR
LATER CHANGE. MR. BEGIN SEEMS TO HAVE FOUND TIN
MR. CARTER A 'MAN' THAT HE CAN HANDLE.

"THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT'S OWN WEAK STANDING
AT HOME DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY MEANINGFUL GROUND FOR
EXPECTING ANY NEW FORCEFUL EFFORT TO BRING THE
ISEAELIS TO TERMS.

"WITH THE MILITARY OPTION DISCOUNTED AND WITH
POLITICAL PRESSURE FROM THE U.S. UNLIKELY THE
GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL OBVIOUSLY SEES NOTHING TO
MOTIVATE COMPROMISE.

"IF THE SITUATION IS TO CHANGE, ARABS MUST FIND
A COURSE OF ACTION THAT WILL ALTER ONE OF THESE TWO
BASIC ISRAELI ASSUMPTIONS.

"IF A DIRECT MILITARY CONFRONTATION IS NOT
POSSIBLE THEN SOME OTHER FORM OF MILITARY STRATEGY
MIGHT BE WORKED OUT. A STRATEGY WHERE WEAPONRY IS
NOT THE DECISIVE FACTOR.

"THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE WOULD, OF COURSE, BE
TO MAKE THE U.S. POLICY MAKERS REALISE THAT PRESSURE
ON ISRAEL WOULD ACTUALLY SERVE AMERICAN INTERESTS
AND NOT JUST THE ARABS.

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"EITHER OPTION HAS A BASIC PRE-REQUISITE HOWEVER:
A UNIFIED ARAB STAND. WITHOUT THAT, VERY LITTLE
CAN BE HOPED FOR. AND WITH IT THERE MIGHT STILL
BE HOPE TO CRACK THE STUBBORN NUT OF BEGIN AND
COMPANY." END QUOTE.

2. COMMENT: EDITIRIAL SEEMS TO BE TELLING SAUDI
PUBLIC WHAT SAUDI OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN TELLING US IN
INCREASINGLY EMPHATIC TERMS SINCE LEEDS TALKS. SADAT
INITIATIVE, THE THEME GOES, HAS ACHIEVED ALL THAT COULD
BE EXPECTED OF IT AND HAS IN REALITY COME TO END.
NOW IS TIME TO TURN TO NEW EFFORT AND THE PREREQUISITE
FOR ANY NEW EFFORT IS ARAB SOLIDARITY. IN LINE WITH
THIS, AL-BILAD REPORTS THAT FAHD IS BUILDING BRIDGES
TO THE CONFRONATTION STATES AND SAUDI ENDEAVORS ARE
AIMED AT DEFINING THE FUTURE OF PEACE ENDEAVORS. AGREE-
EMNT IS EXPECTED ON DEMANDING THAT THE U.S. COME FORWARD
WITH A PRACTICAL PEACE PROPOSAL. UKAZ IN ITS FRONT
PAGE EDITIRIAL URGES THE U.S. TO COME FORWARD WITH ITS
OWN PROPOSALS FOR ESTABLISHING PEACE SHOULD CURRENT
EFFORTS TO TAME BEGIN'S INTRANSIGENCE FAIL.
WEST

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